

**TOWN OF HAMILTON  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
AUGUST 13, 2014**

The Board of Selectmen met at Hamilton Town Hall at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, August 13, 2014 with Scott Maddern, David Neill, Marc Johnson, Jeff Hubbard, and Jennifer Scuteri present. Town Manager Michael Lombardo, Finance Director Deborah Nippes-Mena, DPW Director Bill Redford, Police Chief Russell Stevens, and Planning Board Chair Jeff Melick also present.

**Call to order**

Scott Maddern called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**Public Comment**

Bill Redford as a non-resident presented the Town of Hamilton with Hamilton Scottish clan tartan and badge.

**Town Manager's report**

Town Manager Michael Lombardo gave an update on water main replacement program with construction occurring in late August. Bids will be opened the second week of September and construction will commence in mid-October weather provided. The roads where work is planned include: Cunningham Drive, Garfield Avenue, Grant Avenue, Lois Street, Porter Lane, Railroad Avenue, Rust Street, Sunset Lane, and Woodland Mead (this is a private road that contains a bleeder valve on a dead end loop that will be replaced with a circular loop and the road dug up for water project is the Town's responsibility to repair). Up-to-date information on this work will be posted on the Town's website.

**Chairman/Selectmen reports**

David Neill described how marvelous the museum is at the Patton Homestead. He opined that it would be nice to keep the view from the house as it is currently. Jennifer Scuteri concurred that tour of the Patton Homestead was great. Discussion ensued with Jeff Hubbard about installation of the downtown benches where pads have to be built, and this project is in the bidding process. Also, that Hubbard will speak to Lombardo offline about fire engine display house and other clean-up projects around Town. Marc

Johnson mentioned residents he met while on vacation who were singing the praises of Hamilton.

Scott Maddern spoke to discussion with his counterpart in Wenham Jack Wilhelm who is interested in joint meeting with Selectmen from both towns. That effort is underway regarding a technical consultant to estimate cost of pool project paid for in FY'15 budget with Hamilton, Wenham and Recreation Revolving funds, and analysis of Fairhaven field as a location for pool. Wenham is not having a fall Town Meeting so CPCs in Hamilton and Wenham will be approached about design funds for pool project. Maddern noted that FinCom Chair Rick Sprenkle, HW School Committee Chair Bill Wilson and Wilhelm are interested in future discussion about three-year budget forecast. He referred to time and project tracking that was recommended in Collins Center report about joint DPW. Also, that he had participated in ice bucket challenge to raise funds for ALS.

### **SPECIAL HONORED GUEST**

#### **Rep. Brad Hill – Report from Beacon Hill**

Rep. Brad Hill reported on state budget including how he and Senator Bruce Tarr had assisted the Town with a \$14,000 Mass. Cultural Council technical grant for the Patton estate, \$100,000 for a public safety grant, and \$50,000 for downtown improvements. He also noted that the state will see \$1 billion in increased revenue for FY'15 which should positively impact the Town by a few thousand dollars for local aid, and the P.I.L.O.T. for state-owned land was increased from \$108,000 to \$126,000.

The Chapter 70 education formula was increased by \$140 million, the Town of Hamilton will realize a \$45,000 increase to its \$3.3 million in funding. Hill noted that the funding formula is not fair to suburban communities and a commission has been put in place to analyze distribution of Chapter 70 money. Also, the regional school transportation funding was increased from \$321,000 to \$412,000 for this year although this expense is not fully funded by the state.

Hill stated his concern about three years from now the state will lose \$900 million from its budget relative to Affordable Care Act resulting in cut to local aid. Discussion ensued about how the matching fund amount for Community Preservation Act funding would be known in the next couple of months. Also, that Hill and Tarr would be notified about Town Meeting schedules so they could give an update to voters.

## CONSENT AGENDA

Maddern read items on Consent Agenda.

- **One Day Liquor License** – Essex County Trail Association for an event on Sunday, August 24, 2014
- **Approve Minutes** – July 28, 2014 Regular Session

Maddern entertained a motion to accept the Consent Agenda as read. Hubbard so moved. Johnson seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

## APPOINTMENT

Deputy Tree Warden – William Redford to a term expiring June 30, 2015

Maddern entertained a motion to appoint William Redford as Deputy Tree Warden to a term expiring June 30, 2015. Hubbard so moved. Johnson seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

## AGENDA

### Final review of Personnel Policies

Input from department heads was included in the latest version of the Personnel Policies. Maddern entertained a motion to approve the Personnel Policies for the Town of Hamilton. Neill moved that the Selectmen adopt the Personnel Policies and Procedures as presented titled "Personnel Policies and By-laws and Administrative Procedures for the Town of Hamilton". Scuteri seconded the motion.

Neill and Scuteri concurred about the importance of getting this policy work done. Hubbard opined that he was not able to support the document since this was the first time he was seeing this version of the draft and that he wanted to hear from employees about their concerns. Johnson mentioned that changes in this document compared to original draft were not substantive, and noted that this is a rational document that could be amended if a component of it does not work. Maddern thanked Town officials for their contribution moving the document forward so employees and public understand expectations. Lombardo acknowledged yeoman's work by Finance Director Deborah Nippes-Mena and staff. VOTE: 4-0-1 with Hubbard abstaining due to lack of information.

**Sen. Bruce Tarr – Report from Beacon Hill**

Senator Tarr repeated information Hill mentioned on the funding that Hamilton is receiving for public safety, downtown improvements and regional school transportation. He also spoke to the 75% reimbursement level for SPED Circuit Breaker as well as pursuit to include SPED transportation cost for outplaced students in the circuit breaker, and that work has to be done with SPED to make it more cost effective. He noted that the foundation budget assumes SPED enrollment that is inaccurate, and that attention is being given to costs associated with energy, health insurance and teachers' pensions. Also mentioned was that level of budget spending is going up by 5% but local receipts need to support this and the amount of local aid has gone down.

Discussion ensued about state population decreasing due to high cost of living in Massachusetts and need to elevate job skills, need for housing in the \$400,000 range for single family homes especially for elderly which can prove difficult due to cost of land and could be addressed with cottage housing and cluster zoning as well as inclusionary zoning, that Tarr could begin conversation with cell phone carriers to assist Hamilton with its inconsistent coverage, and declining student population in Town. Tarr also mentioned that he could work with Lombardo relative to possibility of filing legislation on the housing issue.

**Discussion re Cell Phone Reception in Hamilton and existing Cell Tower By-law**

Discussion ensued about how action is needed to improve cell phone capability in Hamilton. Selectmen addressed how the Congregational Church had its application for a cell tower in its church steeple rejected by Verizon, that there continue to be pockets of poor cell phone coverage in Town especially in the downtown area that impacts public safety operations, merchants, and families who use cell phones rather than land lines for communication, whether or not a special permit from the Planning Board is required if a cell tower is contained in an enclosed structure, how the Town's existing cell tower by-law is overly restrictive and has essentially kept towers from being installed in Hamilton, that the carriers may not be interested in locating towers in Town as they have been historically to reach a larger user base due to maturity in the market.

The Board discussed next steps with Planning Board Chair Jeff Melick and Police Chief Russell Stevens to reach resolution to the problem. Discussion addressed how the Town has had consultants in to provide insight on where a tower could be located in Hamilton and the restrictions of the by-law have prevented any Town-owned land from being considered due to setback requirements. Also mentioned was whether or not

outreach should occur with private land owners who could potentially communicate with carriers. Melick opined that changing the by-law may not be the first approach since residents are concerned about having a cell tower installed near their properties, and he stated that it would be helpful to understand what a solution would look like (i.e., 45' tower). Maddern recommended that Scuteri update Melick about Town's efforts to date regarding cell towers (i.e., use of consultants), Johnson provide current cell phone coverage maps, and Board consider potential change to by-law in time for ATM. Neill emphasized the need to solve the poor coverage problem and reiterated impact to younger families living in the downtown who do not have landlines. Hubbard expressed interest in understanding how much staff time and money would be directed towards solving the problem.

Set date for next Board of Selectmen meeting

The next Board of Selectmen's meeting will be held on Monday, August 25.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Consideration of topics for discussion at future Selectmen's meetings

Topics will include housing for seniors in the \$400,000 price range, real estate assessment values, Town Manager goals, pool update relative to joint meeting with Wenham, next steps for landfill, policy for downtown improvements, downtown housing needs and maintenance, CIP, FY'15 budget discussion, and P.I.L.O.T. programs.

Maddern entertained a motion to adjourn at 9:09 p.m. Hubbard so moved. Neill seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted by Jane Dooley, Minutes Secretary

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

  
Clerk

